

INDIA PROTESTS POPE'S VISIT

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I was disturbed to learn of the organized protests against Pope John Paul II in anticipation of his recent visit to India. In fact, many would tell you that there was more reason to worry about his safety on this trip than when he traveled to communist Poland under martial law. Although the Pope left the country safely, I cannot forget the ghastly image printed by the media of Hindu activists burning an effigy of Pope John Paul II in New Delhi before his visit.

Mr. Speaker, these protests were led by a violent faction of Hindu fundamentalists that are closely aligned with the Hindu nationalist government. They have carried out a wave of brutal attacks on Christians within the past year. Since Christmas Day of 1998, they have burned down Christian churches, prayer halls, and schools. Also, four priests have been murdered, and earlier this year Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two young sons were burned alive.

How much more of this must we witness? Already 200,000 Christians, 250,000 Sikhs, 65,000 Muslims, and tens of thousands of others have fallen at the hands of either the Indian government or those closely related to the government since the subcontinent's independence a half-century ago.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the articles from India Abroad and the New York Post into the RECORD regarding this disturbing issue.

[From the New York Post, Oct. 28, 1999]

POPE'S PASSAGE TO INDIA MAY BE MOST PERILOUS YET

(By Rod Dreher)

Will Pope John Paul II be safe in India? There is more reason to worry for the pontiff's welfare as he visits the world's largest democracy next week than there was when he went to communist Poland under martial law.

That's because a small but violent faction of Hindu fundamentalists aligned with the Hindu nationalist government have been conducting an organized campaign against the pope as part of a concerted effort to demonize and persecute the country's tiny Christian minority.

The government promises to protect the Holy Father from coalition fanatics. But while John Paul can rely on state security, his Catholic followers and Protestant brethren remain at the mercy of Hindu brown-shirts.

These thugs have carried out vicious attacks on Christians since a coalition led by the hard-line Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came to power two years ago.

Freedom House, the Washington-based human-rights organization, says there have been more recorded incidents of violence against India's Christian minority in the past year than in the previous half-century.

The most shocking incident took place in January, when Hindu thugs burned alive Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two little boys. That was far from an isolated incident.

In 1998, the Catholic Bishop's Conference in India reported 108 cases of beatings,

stonings, church burnings, looting of religious schools and institutions, and other attacks on Catholics and evangelicals.

It has been just as bad this year. Just last month, a Catholic priest working in the same territory as the Staines family was murdered while saying Mass for converts, his heart pierced by a poison-tipped arrow.

Why the attacks? Hindu nationalist leaders, particularly those associated with the BJP-allied World Hindu Congress (VHP), claim Christians are on "conversion overdrive."

This is preposterous. Despite being present in India for almost 2,000 years, and educating hundreds of millions of Indian children, Christianity claims the allegiance of less than 3 percent of the country's people.

Even in Orissa state, site of the worst anti-Christian violence, fewer than 500 conversions occur each year.

Still, Hindu nationalists continue to make wild-eyed assertions, such as VHP leader Mohan Joshi's recent statement that missionary homes run by Mother Teresa's order were "nothing but conversion centers."

Not true, but if it were, so what?

We know perfectly well what would have become of the diseased and the destitute had Mother Teresa's nuns not rescued them from the street: They would have been left to die in the gutter, condemned by a culture that decrees these lowborn souls deserve their fate.

"What has the VHP done to better the life of the low castes? The answer is nothing," says Freedom House investigator Joseph Assad.

"When I was in India, I talked to one Christian who was forcibly reconverted to Hinduism. He told me when no one cared for us, Christians came and gave us food, gave us shelter and gave us medicine."

An Indian Protestant activist who lives in New Jersey told me BJP rule has meant open season on followers of Christ.

"The last two years have been unprecedented," the man says.

"They have burned churches down, raped nuns, killed people. We complain to the government, but they look the other way."

The Hindu militants certainly do not represent the sentiments of all Hindus. But these thugs have the tacit support and protection of the ruling BJP. Indeed, the BJP Web site condemns "Semitic monotheism"—Judaism, Christianity and Islam—for "bringing intolerance to India."

This is what is known to professional propagandists as the Big Lie. No wonder Hindu hard-liners confidently pillage Christian communities.

How many more Hindu-led atrocities will Christians and others suffer before Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee calls off the nationalist dogs?

Will it take a physical assault on the Holy Father for the world to wake up to the kind of place Gandhi's great nation has become.

[From India Abroad, Oct. 29, 1999]

PROTEST MARCH LAUNCHED AGAINST THE POPE'S VISIT

(By Frederick Noronha)

PANAJI, GOA.—Hindu right-wing groups flagged off a Goa-to-Delhi protest march on Oct. 21 that could fuel the controversy surrounding Pope John Paul II's visit to India, scheduled for early November.

The campaigners are protesting what they call large-scale conversions to Christianity in India and want the Pope to say that all religions are equal.

The protest march, which is scheduled to end in Delhi around the time of the Pope's visit, is being called a "Dharma Jagran Abhiyan." It was flagged off from Divar, an island off Old Goa, once a center for Catholic evangelization.

"This awareness march is for people of all religions. Christians are brothers of the same blood," said Subhash Velingkar, one of the organizers of the march.

Velingkar lashed out at the English language media for voicing concern that the march could ignite anti-Christian feelings.

At the same time, however, Velingkar condemned religious conversions saying that they changed "not just the religion of people, but also their culture and traditions."

He criticized Delhi Archbishop Alan de Lastic for "sending an SOS message to the Vatican" complaining about the situation in India. "Why should people from India complain to the Vatican?" he asked.

Velingkar reiterated the demand voiced by the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), the right-wing affiliate of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) which leads the coalition government at the Center, that the Pope should make an admission in his public address at Delhi that all the religions are the same and all lead to salvation.

The VHP last week once again welcomed the Pope's visit, stating that it was not against Christianity, but was opposed to "Churchianity."

A VHP affiliate, the Sanskriti Raksha Manch, has already demanded an apology from the Pope for the atrocities committed during Inquisition in Portuguese-ruled Goa in the 16th century.

From Goa, the march passes through Belgaum, Nipani, Mumbai, Kolhapur and Nashik in Karnataka and Maharashtra, before entering Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh and then onward to Delhi, covering the 1,300-mile route in about a fortnight. It will reach Delhi by the time of the Pope's visit on Nov. 5.

Newspaper reports quoted Manohar Parrikar, the BJP Leader of the Opposition in the Goa Assembly, as saying that his party was neither opposing nor supporting the march.

He said the movement's leadership was not under the control of the BJP and while individual members of the party were free to join it, the party could not be held responsible for any untoward incident arising from the march.

IN HONOR OF MARGE WILK, RECIPIENT OF THE "VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR" AWARD FROM THE BAYONNE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mrs. Marge Wilk, a life-long resident of Bayonne, New Jersey, for her dedicated service to the Bayonne Historical Society, and for being named this year's "Volunteer of the Year."

Mrs. Wilk began her remarkable career in volunteerism with the Bayonne Historical Society, an organization of residents dedicated to preserving the history of this great city. Serving as a trustee for this organization for many

years, Mrs. Wilk worked to foster the growth of the Society.

In addition to her work with the Bayonne Historical Society, Mrs. Wilk became an active member of numerous civic and educational organizations, playing a vital role in their growth. She served as recording secretary of Marist High School PTA, president of Holy Family Academy Mothers Club, and president of the Holy Family Academy Alumni Mothers Club for eight years.

A graduate of Bayonne High School and the Horace Mann School, Mrs. Wilk is currently a trustee on the Board of the Bayonne Economic Opportunity Foundation and is the recording secretary of the Colgate Retirees Association. She is also a volunteer member of the Communications Committee of B21C, Bayonne in the Twenty-First Century.

Mrs. Wilk, wife of the late Henry Wilk, has worked as an advertising representative at the Bayonne Community News for the past 15 years and in the business office of the Bayonne Times for the past 19 years. She is the mother of four children and the grandmother of Evan and Nicolas.

Mrs. Wilk exemplifies what we appreciate most in the human spirit and provides a living example of what we all should strive for in our everyday lives. For her service to the residents of Bayonne, and for her hard work for the Bayonne Historical Society, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Mrs. Marge Wilk as "Volunteer of the Year."

A FOND FAREWELL TO I. MICHAEL
HEYMAN

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my good friend I. Michael Heyman. As his friends and colleagues gather to honor his retirement from the Smithsonian Institution and his years of service to the University of California Berkeley, I would like to share with the House some of the highlights of Secretary Heyman's distinguished career.

I. Michael Heyman became the 10th secretary of the Smithsonian Institution on Sept. 19, 1994. He heads a complex of 16 museums and galleries and the National Zoological Park, as well as scientific and cultural research facilities in 10 states and the Republic of Panama.

Secretary Heyman served as chancellor of the University of California at Berkeley from 1980 to 1990. He began his career at Berkeley in 1959 as an acting professor of law and became a full professor in 1961. His distinguished teaching career has included service as a visiting professor of law at Yale (1963-1964) and at Stanford (1971-1972).

A strong leader and active fundraiser, he strengthened Berkeley's biosciences departments and successfully promoted ethnic diversification of the undergraduate student body while maintaining high academic standards. The university maintains several large museums and, as chancellor, he actively participated in their supervision.

His distinguished career includes serving as counselor to Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt and as deputy assistant secretary for policy at the Department of the Interior from 1993 to 1994. He is also a member of the state bars of California and New York.

Born on May 30, 1930, in New York City, I. Michael Heyman was educated at Dartmouth College, earning a bachelor's degree in government in 1951. After a year in Washington as a legislative assistant to Senator Irving M. Lyles of New York, he served in the United States Marines as a first lieutenant on active duty from 1951 to 1953, and as a captain in the reserves from 1953 to 1958.

Secretary Heyman received his juris doctor in 1956 from Yale University Law School, where he was editor of the Yale Law Journal. He was an associate with the firm of Carter, Ledyard and Milburn in New York City from 1956 to 1957. He was chief law clerk to Chief Justice Earl Warren from 1958 to 1959.

Over the years, Secretary Heyman has served on and chaired numerous boards and commissions, including almost four years as a member of the Smithsonian's Board of Regents (1990-1994). He has dedicated more than a decade of service to Dartmouth, his alma mater, as a member of its board of trustees from 1982 to 1993 and as chairman of the board from 1991 to 1993. Heyman has also been a member of the board of trustees of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights under Law since 1977.

He is married to Therese Thau Heyman, senior curator on leave from the Oakland Museum in California. Their son, James, is a physicist and teacher.

I join my California colleagues in gratitude and appreciation for Secretary Heyman's contributions to education, law, culture, and above all, public service. His is a career we can only hope others will emulate. We congratulate him on a successful and fulfilling professional life, and we wish him well.

TRIBUTE TO WORCESTER ACADEMY COACH TOM BLACKBURN

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great coach and a tremendous athletic director, Tom Blackburn. Tom will be the recipient of a much-deserved "Banner Celebration" on November 21 at Worcester Academy's Daniels Gymnasium. Tom Blackburn came to Worcester Academy in the Fall of 1973 and retired this past spring. He holds the best coaching record in the school's basketball history, including 7 New England Class A Prep School Championships. As a graduate of Worcester Academy, I am proud to have this opportunity to congratulate Tom Blackburn on his achievements.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in paying tribute to Tom Blackburn for his dedication to his players, his school and his community. He is a treasured friend, and I wish him a happy and healthy retirement.

At this point, Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD an article on Tom Blackburn from

Worcester Academy's alumni magazine, The Hilltopper.

THE BLACKBURN ERA COMES TO AN END

Late in the afternoon of February 27, Tom Blackburn made his final substitutions against Bridgton at the last home game of the season as his twenty-six year career as athletic director and coach at Worcester Academy drew to a close. Though Tom would have greatly preferred a different outcome (Bridgton won 73-64), the game itself was merely a prelude to an afternoon of moving tributes from former colleagues, players, current faculty, family and friends. Of these it was Dee Rowe '47 who seemed to capture the essence of Tom Blackburn: "I will always be grateful to Tom for distinguished service to Worcester Academy. He is an outstanding educator and a man of great honor and integrity."

As part of the celebration, a banner was hoisted commemorating Blackburn's coaching record at the Academy. It is a lofty record indeed. In addition to being the basketball coach with the most wins in the Academy's history (he has been at the helm for 395 of the 895 wins Worcester Academy has posted since 1917), coach Blackburn's team have also made impressive showings in the New England Class A Tournament Championships. Twenty-four of his twenty-six squads qualified for post-season play with eleven reaching the finals and seven earning championships. That's one championship team for every three-and-a-half years of coaching.

Tom Blackburn has also nurtured some great players over his quarter-century career. Former Boston Celtic player and current Indiana Pacers Assistant Coach Rick Carlisle '79, ex-LA Clipper Jeff Cross '80 and University of Maryland Center Obinna Ekezie '95 [as of fall '99, now of the NBA's Vancouver Grizzlies] come immediately to mind.

Morgan "Mo" Cassara '93, Tom's successor as basketball coach, commented, "My post-graduate year at WA was the greatest experience of my life athletically. Tom's discipline and style of coaching inspired me to become a coach too."

In 1995 Tom Blackburn was inducted into the Academy's Hall of Fame, evidence of his long-term impact and positive influence on its students and on the Academy as a whole.

Headmaster Dexter Morse reflected that, "Tom has been more than just a head coach and athletic director. He has been a wonderful representative of our school both in the Worcester community and in the greater independent school arena. He will always be known for his strong character, his dedication to teaching and his love for his family and his school. He is without question an inspiration to us all."

TRIBUTE TO RETIRED NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CENTRAL REGION DIRECTOR RICHARD P. AUGULIS

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Richard P. Augulis on the occasion of his retirement as Director of the National Weather Service Central Region headquartered in my Congressional District.